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On the Conceptualization
of Job Satisfaction

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I. Job Satisfaction as an Area of Study

Introduction

Job satisfaction is one of the major areas of study in
such sub-fields of sociology as industrial sociology, complex
organizations, social psychology of organizations, sociology
of work, and various types of occupational studies. In the
United States alone, it has been observed that more than 800
studies of job satisfaction have been conducted since 1925
(Napior, 1969). Business and educational administrators have
been interested in understanding the relations between job
satisfaction and such consequences as labor turnover, absent-
eeism, and productivity. Job satisfaction is thus treated as
an independent variable in this context. On the other hand,
social scientists have been interested primarily in the determ-
inants, to be found either in the personality or the occupational
environment or both, of a person's job satisfaction which is thus
treated as a dependent variable. This way, it is conceptually
consistent with the attempt to identify the components or dimen-
sions that constitute the concept of job satisfaction. It is
in this sense that the concept is treated in this paper, although

it is not so much concerned with relatively distinct dimensions of satisfaction as with some relatively general process whereby satisfaction is generated.

Job satisfaction is one of those variables employed in social research that involve considerable problems of conceptualization. Of course, it may be generally, yet perhaps vaguely, agreed that job satisfaction refers to an individual's affective response to his work experience. However, precisely what types of factors or mechanisms account for such response and what implications such response may have for the individual are not immediately clear. Further, what "job satisfaction" really and substantively means often tends to vary according to the type of work. That is, what constitute a set of positive vis-a-vis negative feelings may depend on the nature of the work in question. The purpose of this paper is to examine the concept of job satisfaction somewhat carefully, hoping to come to grips with the question of how job satisfaction comes about generally. First, partly to demonstrate the variety of factors which may account for satisfaction and partly to lay down some background for suggesting that a more uniform conceptual approach is possible, a rather sketchy and selective survey of some relevant literature is made. Second, some elements of a theoretical framework centering around the motivation to preserve self-evaluation in one's role performance are proposed as a useful tool for conceptualizing job satisfaction, especially in the relatively "professional" occupations.

Third, a number of implications for empirical research are raised for further consideration.

Some Studies on Job Satisfaction in Non-academic Contexts

Many studies on job satisfaction have concentrated on the correlates of satisfaction, such as length of service, education, age, sex, income, working conditions, and so on. Bruce and his associates (1968) compared the degree of association between job satisfaction (measured by the question: How do you like your job?) and a set of twenty-nine "traditional" correlates among independent businessmen, salaried managers (department heads, professionals, etc.), and hourly paid workers (operators, mechanics, etc.), and found that the satisfaction of businessmen was related to a rather different set of variables. For businessmen, the moderate correlates were largely "job-related," such as career mobility, personal evaluation of earnings, and role conflict. Those for managers were much less job-specific and included such items as community recreational facilities and satisfaction with family. For workers, correlates of satisfaction included both job-related and job-unrelated variables.

Palola and Larson (1965) did a somewhat similar study on hospital personnel, but focussed on the association between satisfaction (measured by summated ratings of ten aspects of the job) and the degree to which six areas of "work values" were perceivably achieved among various groups of hospital

employees. They found that the degree to which differential fulfillment in these work values correlated with job satisfaction varied according to the occupational category. Thus, while identification with the hospital as a work value was significantly correlated with satisfaction among many groups of hospital personnel, association with co-workers showed significant correlations in only office workers and nurses. Other groups of personnel displayed still different patterns. They concluded that ". . . elements of satisfaction are drawn from different areas of concern for persons of varied organizational positions." (Palola and Larson, 1965, p.212)

Palola and Larson's study, as they indicated, was inspired by an earlier study on satisfaction of white-collar workers by Nancy Morse (1953) in which the thesis was that the degree of satisfaction which a person feels with a particular aspect of the job environment is a function of the strength of needs which are relevant to that aspect and the degree to which such needs are fulfilled by the environment. She makes the general statement: "The greater amount the individual gets, the greater his satisfaction and, at the same time, the more the individual still desires, the less his satisfaction." (Morse, 1953, p.28) While Morse's "need" was restricted to the individual's need for promotion compared with the individual's evaluation of the extent of fulfillment of certain values specific to the work environment in Palola and Larson's study, both studies strongly suggest that the indivi-

dual's value system and the social context of work come into interaction in the generation of satisfaction. Whether it be some personal need or some form of externalization of the self in one's work, it seems useful to consider some personal attribute in studying satisfaction.

In a recent study of senior non-expatriate civil servants of Hong Kong as an occupational group, Aline Wong (1972) reported that the most attractive features of the job of these people were security, challenge, and responsibility, while the most unsatisfactory features included strain of work, lack of promotion prospect, and low job mobility. The variables which correlated relatively highly with job satisfaction (measured by how much the respondent liked or disliked the present job) were, in descending order, initiative, people in department, contact with men at top, variety, and value of work to community. Even within the broad category of senior non-expatriate officers, the level of job satisfaction varied according to the type of work. Thus, officers in personnel, policy-making, and public relations tended to be most satisfied as compared with those in technical and secretarial services.

From the findings of the studies cited above, it can be seen that different occupational groups have possibly different determinants of satisfaction. If some form of reward is an integral part of satisfaction, then different occupations or different segments within the same occupation are likely to emphasize different kinds of rewards.

In a study of manual workers, Form and Geschwender (1962) treated job satisfaction as an evaluation of life situation influenced by the person's position, in terms of experiences in the social network of opportunities, relative to others who serve as a meaningful point of reference. Thus, those whose occupational level was higher than their fathers' and brothers' tended to be more satisfied. (Job satisfaction was measured by the question: How do you like y your job?) Also, those workers who had experienced greater upward occupational mobility relative to others whose fathers were occupationally similar to the workers' fathers exhibited higher satisfaction scores. Such a finding is in line with some previous research such as that of Patchen (1958 and 1961). The general proposition is that persons in privileged situations relative to their fellows will derive more satisfaction. The implication for our conceptualization of job satisfaction is that allowance should be made for the role of reference groups, whoever they may be, when we wish to study what is related to or what has an impact on satisfaction. We shall return to this point later in this paper.

Some Studies on Job Satisfaction in Academic Contexts

Some interesting findings have been reported by Eckert and Stecklein (1961) on job satisfaction of college teachers. Using open-ended questions they found that aspects related to the nature of the work (such as "association with students", "helping young people grow") and working conditions (such as "fine colleagues", "intellectually stimulating associations") constituted the major sources of satisfaction, whereas recognition was little mentioned as a source of satisfaction. The "very satisfied" teachers were more often found in four-year institutions than in junior colleges, tended to spend more time in research and writing, and were more likely than the "dissatisfied" teachers to mention the intellectual challenge and stimulation of the job as a major satisfaction.

It appears, then, that for academicians, the work or role activity itself can partly account for their satisfaction. Perhaps academic work provides an opportunity for developing a sense of self-worth or self-actualization which is intrinsically gratifying. Thus, in a study of occupational goals of the academic world and of the business world, Goodwin (1969) found that professors assigned the greatest importance to having the kind of work that "gives me a chance to develop my own special abilities" followed by "helping other people". Business executives, while also placing greatest importance to developing special abilities, considered having a chance "to get to the top" second in importance. Further, college

professors clearly showed a de-emphasis of monetary reward which to the business executives is a symbol of success. Thus, academia and business represent two rather different worlds with different occupational orientations.

Professional values and self-conceptions apparently play an important part in the work of academicians. It has been observed that the social organization of academic faculties centers around the ideals of professional expertise and the collective collegial pattern. Indeed, the implications of a collegial structure, in terms of mutual influence in interpersonal interactions, have been found to be related to the satisfaction of academicians. Thus, Hill and French (1967) found that the sanctions employable by the department chariman in the area of effective interpersonal contacts which are likely to affect professors may contribute to the satisfaction of professors in the department. Bachman (1968) showed that the "effectiveness" of the dean in terms of his influence through personal qualities such as expertise and respect is significantly related to faculty satisfaction while faculty members would be less satisfied to view their own actions as deferring to the dean's legitimate rights and pressures by virtue of his position.

In their pilot study of the academic profession, Parsons and Platt (1968) analysed their data in terms of institutional levels. Institutions were classified as "high", "medium", and "low" on a Scale of Institutional Differentiation,

which referred to the institution's preoccupation with intellectual and collegial values and research orientation. Satisfaction, one of their dependent variables, was found to be associated with institutional level. Sixty per cent of those institutions that are "high" in differentiation, compared with 25 per cent at those that are "low", rated their career advancement in the top fifth of their profession in comparison with their contemporaries. Sixty-two per cent at the "high" schools were satisfied with their current position, compared with 58 per cent at the "low" schools. It was also found that the faculty at the "high" schools were more dependent upon their recognition among their colleagues for their personal evaluation than those at the "low" schools (83 per cent vs. 60 per cent). The implication is that institutions as work environments of academicians carry with them greater or lesser career and professional opportunities which have varying significance for the maintenance and improvement of faculty members' status, as one can see in the writings of Wilson (1942), and Caplow and McGee (1958).

We have thus seen, from the foregoing brief survey of some literature of job satisfaction studies, that precisely what variables are related to job satisfaction depends very much on the type of occupation. Thinking about it on a relatively superficial level one might feel that this sounds reasonable enough since occupations differ from one another in various aspects, e.g., qualifications, skills, pay, contact

with people, opportunity for initiative or autonomy, etc.
However, if one pursues further in trying to understand what
makes for satisfaction as a basic kind of response of the in-
dividual to his work, one would have to examine in some detail
the meaning of satisfaction and the meaning of work in the con-
text of a "career". Furthermore, in order to arrive at some
systematic picture of the mechanism underlying the occurrence
or emergence of satisfaction, one would have to try to concep-
tualize the process in some broader theoretical framework
which perhaps could incorporate a wide variety of specific
variables that are related to job satisfaction in particular
situations.

II. Toward a Theoretical Framework for the Study of Satisfaction

Having briefly introduced some relevant studies on job satisfaction our main concern in this paper is to identify the elements of a general theoretical framework that may facilitate the study of satisfaction despite the specific differences in the nature of a job. Let us first try to clarify what we mean by "satisfaction".

Meaning of Satisfaction

The term "satisfaction" is generally understood to be an individual's emotive or affective response, both in a positive or in a negative direction, to some experience or situation. There is some debate regarding whether satisfaction is a unidimensional concept or a multidimensional one. Some useful reviews of the literature in this connection have been offered by Prichard (1960), Vroom (1964), and Napior (1969). One can say that satisfaction is related to many rather specific and immediate aspects of a person's work, as is connoted by the term "job satisfaction". One can also say that satisfaction is related to certain broader and more abstract aspects of work circumscribed by some longer time span, as the term "career satisfaction" may suggest. Then there is "intrinsic satisfaction" arising out of the work itself and related to various "needs" of the ego (Gross and Napior, 1967). Dimensionality is certainly a problem in conceptualization. But if dimensionality refers to the question of "components", which in the empirical context amounts to the number of

clusters of relatively homogeneous indicators related to the same area, then the answer to this question is largely governed by all the particulars of the job or job situation concerned. Besides, it may be empirically demonstrated that the various dimensions of satisfaction as suggested by the several terms just mentioned may indeed be correlated to some extent. This may result in some such statements as "If a person is satisfied with the intrinsic nature of the job, he tends to be satisfied with the job as a whole also". Should this occur, the distinction of dimensions may invite doubt and perhaps a different classification may be adopted depending on, for instance, patterns of correlations or factor analysis results. Such effort in conceptualization is undeniably important and can contribute significantly to a refinement of dimensions of satisfaction for particular occupations. It must be realized, however, that this type of investigation is more concerned with "What _is_ job satisfaction?" than with "How does job satisfaction come about?"

Since we are concerned primarily with how job satisfaction comes about, the assumption is made that, in a broad sense, inherent in any satisfaction is an evaluation of the past and the present, although with variations in degree, based upon which some sort of a future outlook may be attained. The major "generators", as it were, of satisfaction are probably related to the relatively overarching aspects of a career such as an evaluation of one's standing in comparison to one's
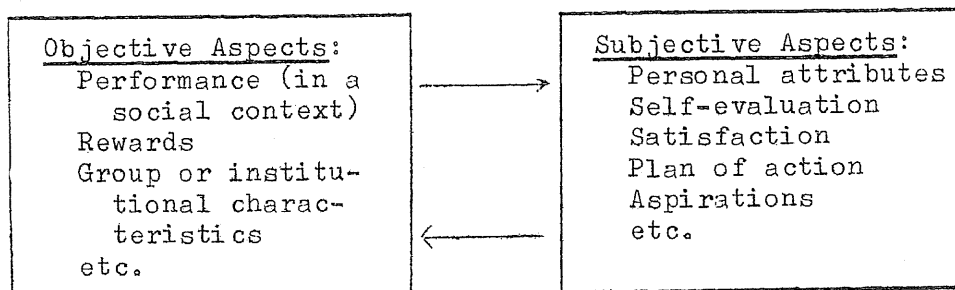
contemporaries, although the more specific aspects of the work
situation and the nature of the work itself can also be involved
as they directly or indirectly affect one's career. In other
words, while we acknowledge the possibility of multiple dimen-
sions of satisfaction, as implicated in the previous paragraph,
we also assume that it will be useful for the purposes of this
paper to think of satisfaction as a "global" construct which,
as an affective response of the individual to his work, is
basically an evaluation of a rather broad situation, both tem-
porally and spatially speaking. Furthermore, from this point
of view, satisfaction is akin to the feeling of how well one
has performed or how much one has achieved. It is thus in
part a sense of efficacy, derived from judging one's work in
a rather broad context which is likely to take into account
other people's reactions and evaluations as well as one's own
standards and aspirations.

General Conceptualization of a Career

Following the formulation of Hughes (1958), a career
has both objective and subjective aspects which come into
interaction with each other.

> . . . A career consists, objectively, of a series of
> status and clearly defined offices. Subjectively, a
> career is the moving perspective in which the person
> sees his life as a whole and interprets the meaning
> of his various attributes, actions, and the things
> which happen to him. (Hughes, 1958, p. 63)

What a person does by virtue of his position within an
institutional context (such as in the case of the academician),
the opportunities available, the limitations present, and the
rewards that he obtains as a result of his role performance
are all largely objective facts. On the subjective side, the
person makes certain assessments of his work in terms of his
own standards or standards of some reference group and derives
satisfaction of some sort. On the basis of such assessments,
the person would be able to map out his plans, and maintain or
modify his goals. Since a career is a time-embodied process,
these aspects — objective and subjective — are constantly in
interaction with each other. It is in fact a kind of sociali-
zation process whereby the person learns from past experience
and from interacting with various elements in the environment
— subcultures, expectations, norms, and so on — in such a
way that he comes to develop some self-identity in the world
of work and to establish or modify some goal which gives his
career both meaning and direction. The essence of this process
can be diagrammatically represented as follows:

| Objective Aspects:
    Performance (in a
       social context)
    Rewards
    Group or institu-
       tional charac-
       teristics
    etc. | → ← | Subjective Aspects:
    Personal attributes
    Self-evaluation
    Satisfaction
    Plan of action
    Aspirations
    etc. |

If we keep in mind the fact that such interplay between
the person and the environmental context he is located in can
occur in different occupations and endure through time, we
have essentially the notion of a dynamic circular model incor-
porating both the personal system and the social system of work.

The Attainment of Role Identities

In the above, we suggested the notion that in the course
of interaction with his social environment, a person develops
some conception of himself. This conception arises out of the
performance of some role in his work and thus gives him a par-
ticular identity. The self, which gives meaning to the person's
life, grows in the process of the person's enacting his roles
in an interaction context. This line of thinking is along the
tradition of George H. Mead who regarded the self as an out-
growth of social experience and activity. The self is also
both object and subject of action. It is an object when the
person is able to react to his own actions and personal quali-
ties as he realizes how others react to them or as he expects
others to react. It is a subject as the person, being aware
of what or who he is, is able to plan and direct his actions
or modify his personal qualities.

Concpetion of self or, suggestive of interpersonal in-
teraction, "role-identity", is the central concept in McCall
and Simmons' exposition of human interaction experiences.
"A role-identity is (an individual's) imaginative view of

himself as he likes to think of himself being and acting as

an occupant of (a particular social position)." (McCall and

Simmons, 1966, p.67) They point out that role-identities con-

tain both idiosyncratic and conventional elements. Idiosyncracy

results from the person's unique experience while conventions

embody general expectations. This explains in part why persons

occupying the same position show many differences in their

actual behavior. Whatever their contents, role-identities do

not have a validity by themselves; they have to be "legitimated"

before they can become meaningful and directional conceptions

of the self. Legitimation of role-identities is obtainable

through role performances whereby the person receives "role-

support" from one's audiences. Thus McCall and Simmons observe

that:

> (Role-support) is . . . a set of reactions and perform-
> ances by others the expressive implications of which tend
> to confirm one's detailed and imaginative view of himself
> as an occupant of a position. Role-support is centrally
> the implied confirmation of the specific contents of one's
> idealized and idiosyncratic imaginations of self. (McCall
> and Simmons, 1966, p.73)

Role-support may take the form of acknowledgment of

one's rights and duties corresponding to the role, or social

approval of one's conduct, or various kinds of recognition.

It is recognition as a form of role-support that we shall

later pay attention to. Recognition from one's peers and

colleagues, it can be argued, has the function of confirming

the role-identities of such professionals as academic men,

whether these be, for example, identities of teachers, scholar-

researchers, administrators, or mixtures of them. The more general concept of role-support, as applied to the interaction-between-objective-and-subjective-aspects view of a career, has a particular relevance in that it helps us to add a rather useful "bridge" between the objective and the subjective. Man needs role-support of some kind to some degree in his work in the course of his career in order that he comes to feel that he is part of some reality. One can sense implications along this dimension in Hughes' discussion on the meaning of a career. He writes:

> ₒ ₒ ₒ Institutions are but the forms in which the collective behavior and collective action of people go on. In the course of a career the person finds his place within these forms, carries on his active life with reference to other people, and interprets the meaning of the one life he has to live. (Hughes, 1958, p.67, italics supplied)

There are two points concerning role-support that are worth noticing. First, role-support from different audiences is typically not given equal weight. Thus, only the reactions of those colleagues who are competent professionals are seriously taken by most academicians; others' reactions may not count or do not count as much. Second, role-support is seldom perfect nor ever long-lasting. Group membership, opportunities, values, and norms are all subject to change. There is almost always some discrepancy between one's role-identities and the role-support gained from role performance. Thus, one is constantly in need of legitimation of one's identities. In the process of interaction, some of the identities may receive more legitimation than others, depending on opportunities and other

situational conditions. Taking into consideration such other factors as the person's own commitment and investment (of resources) and his immediate concerns or preferences, certain identities are likely to be more important than others so that his course of action will proceed in the direction of those identities or in a direction that would bring about maximal role-support. The consequence, in essence, is that while the specific contents of a person's role-identities will change, some set of identities that are legitimate through the attainment of role-support is necessary at any given time to render his work meaningful and to give him in his career a sense of direction and continuity. It is in this respect that satisfaction, as an evaluation of the person's standing in relation to his environment and his career, enters into our frame of reference.

Motivation to Preserve Self-evaluation

Another theoretical foundation of the conceptualization of job satisfaction is found in the notion that man has to live by some level of self-evaluation or self-esteem. In this respect, the ideas of Tamotsu Shibutani and Hans Zetterberg are particularly pertinent.

Shibutani (1961), from the interactionist approach, observes that each person consciously or unconsciously struggles to maintain an adequate level of self-esteem:

> Since self-conceptions emerge in and are sustained by
> social interaction, self-preservation involves being
> <u>assured of the desired responses of other people,</u>
> especially of those toward whom one has formed conjunc-
> tive sentiments. (Shibutani, 1961, p.465, italics
> supplied)

This parallels closely Zetterberg's (1965) statement
about man's acting to realize his self-image. Incorporating
Cooley's proposition that a person's self-evaluation tends to
be a consequence of others' evaluations of him, Zetterberg
postulates his "Theorem of Social Motivation" as follows:

> Persons are likely to engage in those actions within
> their repertoire of actions which maintain the evalu-
> ations that their associates give to them . . .
> (This is) the simplest motivational assumption in
> sociology. It says that among the rewards in social
> life are the favorable esteem and attitudes we might
> receive from others; public opinion of us is thus a
> key to our motivation. (Zetterberg, 1965, p.127)

We see that Shibutani's "desired responses of other
people" and Zetterberg's "evaluations that their associates
give to them" are very much similar. On the assumption that
the loss of self-esteem is threatening to the ego or the pre-
sence of unconfirmed elements in one's role-identities is un-
desirable, one goes about salvaging one's self-esteem or
search for confirmation of his identities. This underscores
the importance of "role-support" that we referred to earlier.
Seen in this context of social interaction, positive evaluations
from one's significant others and reference groups constitute
a prerequisite for social survival and a major ingredient of a
person's favorable evaluation of his work and career.

Some clarification of terms is in place at this point.
We have been referring to "role-identities" of a person in the
context of social or interpersonal interaction. A person may
take on multiple roles (e.g., those of teacher, scholar, con-
sultant, administrator, etc.) in the same time period and thus
may assume many role-identities which, in their totality, will
constitute an overall "self-identity" or "self-image" as far
as his person with respect to his work and career is concerned.
Thus "self-image" may be considered as a generic term whereas
"role-identity" has a connotation more indicative of the inter-
action situation which is central in our conceptualization of
a career. What McCall and Simmons describe about the legiti-
mation of role-identities through role-support, as we mentioned
above, is actually essentially the attempt to preserve the
self-image. The propositions of Shibutani and Zetterberg,
however, make the _motivational_ element more explicit. This is
rather pertinent to our theoretical framework because in
asserting that a career consists of social interaction or
interaction between the person and his environment we are
implying the existence of a motivational base on which acti-
vity takes place. The qualification, however, is that the
"motivation" which concerns us is _social_ in nature; that is,
it accounts for the person's actions only in reference to some
social context. This motivational base takes into consideration
role-support in the form of evaluations from one's reference
groups as they bear upon one's direction and area of action

which in turn "shapes", as it were, one's conceptions about

oneself within the general context of the career.

The Role of Recognition

The importance of recognition to a professional career

is well documented in the sociology of science. In fact, a

major concern with regard to the social organization of science

is the nature of reward that motivates scientists. Merton

(1957) was among the first to point out that the reward system

in science consists in the giving of recognition by the scien-

tist's colleagues in response to the scientist's having made

"genuinely original contributions to the common stock of know-

ledge." (Merton, 1957, p. 454) The scientist's interest in

obtaining recognition is attributed to his commitment to ori-

ginality as a goal in science. Merton writes:

> Recognition of what one has accomplished is thus largely
> a motive derived from institutional emphases. Recognition
> for originality becomes socially validated testimony that
> one has successfully lived up to the most exacting require-
> ments of one's role as scientist. The self-image of the
> individual scientist will also depend greatly on the
> appraisals by his scientific peers of the extent to which
> he has lived up to ... his role. (Merton, 1957, p. 455,
> italics supplied)

Hagstrom (1965) presents the view that social control

in science is exercised in an exchange system wherein informa-

tion (contribution to knowledge) is exchanged for recognition

from colleagues. In this view, the main function of recognition

is the validation and maintenance of standards of performance

so as to reinforce the conformity to scientific norms and

hence constitutes the key mechanism in the organization of science.

Glaser (1964), in his study of the professional careers of scientists in a government medical research organization, also stressed that recognition by colleagues is the "prime mover" of a professional career. As evidence of the scientist's ability, it "has the effects of strengthening or consolidating the scientist's position in science and of advancing his career in terms of work, research conditions, mobility, financial support, and so forth." (Glaser, 1964, p.4)

Storer (1966), in his attempt to develop a theory of the social organization of science, has expanded the meaning of professional recognition even further by stating that it both proclaims the scientist's successful role-performance as well as serves to complete the creative act of the scientist, the latter function being the fundamental basis of the scientist's interest in recognition.[1] Thus, aside from facilitating the integration of the social system of science, recognition has a personal meaning to the scientist: it is a feedback from his audience (mostly other scientists) which in effect emphasizes the "realness" of his scientific endeavors.

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[1] Norman W. Storer, The Social System of Science (New York: Holt, Rinchart and Winston, 1966), p.85.

The immensely varied forms of recognition, such as prizes, awards, honorary degrees, research grants, consultantships, and so on, being symbols of achievement, can be resources that are instrumental to the individual's gaining further achievement. But more importantly, they constitute the cues or indicators that translate objective achievement into part of a subjective self-image.

Many scientists are employed at academic institutions. Presumably many of the norms and values of science bear much similarity with those of other branches of knowledge in academia. Recognition is probably the "building block" of a man's prestige or reputation which in the wider academic community is a quality commonly spoken of, debated upon, and desired, such as in the recruitment of faculty members. It is also probably the only factor that has significant exchange or bargain value for the academician in his career pursuits from institution to institution and from one career stage to another.

A Synthesis of Ideas

In the foregoing discourse, we first adopted the general conception of a career as an ongoing process incorporating the interaction of the objective conditions of the social environment and the subjective aspects of the person.

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[1] Professional recognition or prestige becomes further complicated by other aspects of the social system of academia. See, for instance, Theodore Caplow and Reece J. McGee, _The Academic Marketplace_ (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1965), pp. 110, 136, and 140.

By "interaction" we imply the existence of such events as the person's coming into contact with his associates, investing his energy and resources in certain activities, and deriving some personal meaning from his experience which has implications for his career. Second, we brought into this general framework the notions of "role-identities" and "role-support". A social process in a person's career, being dynamic, consists of the person's constantly assessing himself with respect to his career -- this is our notion of "satisfaction" -- and of his obtaining support from those who are relevant to him in order that his various identities comprising his self-image may be confirmed. This makes real the social world of which he is part. Then we saw that a proposition like Zetterberg's "Theorem of Social Motivation" seems to further characterize the dynamic nature of such a process. If a career is an integral part of a person's self-image, the continuity of a career necessarily involves a motivational element which serves to contribute to the self-image. One must first assume that a self-image is both necessary for social survival and hence worth preserving. Then one may account for a person's activities in terms of preservation of the self-image, which is dependent upon evaluations from the person's associates as a form of role-support. Finally, some authors in the sociology of science have emphasized the importance of professional recognition as it relates to the scientist's self-image as well as to the organization of science itself.

The import of these ideas is that the satisfaction of "professionals" (e.g., scientists, academicians, physicians, etc.) can be related to their professional recognition which in turn is a consequence of what they do in their work. They, like other persons, are motivated to preserve their self-image. By maximizing their role-support in the form of recognition from peers, professional workers will tend to be satisfied in the sense that their self-image as competent professionals will be sustained.

III. <u>Implications for Research</u>

A main purpose of the foregoing exercise is to suggest
way to conceptualize the generation of satisfaction that
would enable us to understand the phenomenon concerned better
than by merely asking some such question as "Are you satisfied
with your job?" or by relating the answer to this question with
various characteristics of the job, although some interesting
results may be obtained. The suggested scheme is however, only
propositional in that it has to be tested and refined in actual
occupational contexts. The operationalization of the scheme
may differ from one occupation to another. Thus, while pro-
fessional recognition from peers may be a vital form of role-
support for scientists, monetary profit may constitute a large
part of role-support for businessmen. Similarly, the motivation
to preserve self-evaluation may be much more salient at a more
abstract level among academicians than among, say, factory
workers. But the motivational element is probably basic in
the dynamics of work and could at least be inferred, given
adequate research design, from certain indicators.

The major utility of the conceptual framework outlined
in this paper appears to be the provision of certain guidelines
for identifying the "determinants", or the components of such
determinants, of job satisfaction within given occupations.
That is, one could take into consideration as many relevant
aspects of the occupation as possible and organize them in

some sort of a theoretical model that purports to account for
satisfaction as a dependent variable. Thus, a person's own
conception of his role in his work, his perception of others'
expectations for him in his work, the extent to which he thinks
he has fulfilled both his own and others' expectations (attain-
ment of role-identity), the relative importance of various
rewards and/or benefits in his job, the extent to which such
rewards and/or benefits are achieved, and the like, can be
incorporated into a network of variables, some of which may
precede others in temporal sequence, to be studied. In a study
of this nature, it might be a good idea to have some knowledge
of where the individual stands in his occupational career, e.g.,
whether he is in his first occupation or has gone a long way
reaching perhaps the climax of his career, since this has
significant implications for how the individual perceives his
social reality. Other important questions to be included in
such a study may well be concerned with events in the past and
probably deeply imbedded personal feelings. Thus a carefully
designed personal interview method is likely to yield better
results than asking respondents to fill out questionnaires.

Finally, since satisfaction is the dependent variable
in the sense described in this paper, the measurement of satis-
faction is particularly worth attention. The single-question
approach, although useable, may be quite limited in interpre-
tation. Given the implied multi-dimensionality of job satis-
faction, the multiple item index method is likely to tap the

individual's affective response to his work more effectively.

In a study of satisfaction in the academic profession (Ng, 1971),

the writer used four questions in constructing a satisfaction

index:

(1) Would you change jobs now? (1 = yes; 2 = possibly;
     3 = no)

(2) Compared with your contemporaries, i.e., those who
     entered your discipline or occupation at about the
     same time you did, how would you rate your own
     career advancement? Consider rank, salary, honours,
     reputation of your institution, etc. (1 = very much
     below average; 2 = below average; 3 = slightly be-
     low average; 4 = about average; 5 = slightly above
     average; 6 = substantially above average or in top
     20 per cent; 7 = far above average, or about top
     10 per cent)

(3) On the whole, do the satisfactions and rewards of
     your present work meet your earlier expectations
     for this stage in your career? (1 = no; 2 = yes;
     3 = they exceed)

(4) Using a five-point scale (5 = strongly disagree to
     1 = strongly agree), to what extent do you agree or
     disagree with the statement: "I often get discour- ed
     aged about my work?"

As the items indicate, a self-evaluation of the indivi-

dual's work, covering in effect the past, the present, and the

future, is measured from several angles. The response cate-

gories to these questions were so coded that a high total

score would mean relatively greater satisfaction. Naturally,

consideration needs to be given to the appropriateness of such

and similar questions for the occupation under investigation.

The problem of validity in particular has always to be faced

and dealt with in the use of similar indices to measure a pheno-

menon as complex as job satisfaction.

Despite the apparent abundance of empirical studies in job satisfaction in various occupational contexts, very limited exploration has been made in providing a more systematic theoretical support to the understanding of satisfaction in general. The ideas presented in this short paper, being rudimentary and exploratory, can only serve the purpose of stimulating further thinking and work along the direction of both theorizing about satisfaction and operationalizing such theorizing into researchable designs. To the extent that this will follow, this brief intellectual exercise will have achieved its goal.

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